

WASPS ACT IN A TRAGEDY

But They Come Very Near Turning It Into a Comedy.

"One of the most laughable scenes I ever witnessed during the representation of one of Shakespeare's tragedies," said a well known theatrical manager to the writer the other day, "happened to the late Tom Keene when he was performing in a northern New York town. The company was playing 'Julius Caesar,' and at the last moment it was found that the property man had failed to send up the regular throne chair used in the scene, and an old rustic chair was hastily procured from the left of the theater and, after being covered with drapery, was pressed into service. In the midst of the scene a large wasp's nest was discovered attached to the chair, and its inhabitants, becoming indignant at the disturbance they had suffered, began to swarm about the stage, seeking revenge upon the Romans in their low necked and short sleeved dresses. The wasps seemed to be particularly offended with Caesar, and it is doubtful if Caesar's death scene was ever acted with more feeling, for at the moment he was being pierced by the conspirators' daggers the wasps were most industrious in their work.

In the tense scene where Caesar appears to Brutus one might almost have doubted if he were the real Caesar. It was the same in form and dress, but the face was no longer the same. In the last act Brutus had one eye closed, Antony a swollen lip, Cassius an enlarged chin, Lucius an inequality in the size of his hands and Octavius Caesar a nose that would have done service as the famous nasal organ of Bardsley in 'Henry IV.'

"The tragedy came very near becoming a roaring comedy when Mr. Keene, as Cassius, said, 'Antony, the posture of your blows is yet unknown but for your words; they rob the Hybla bees and leave them homeless,' and the actor who was doing Antony replied, 'Not stingless too!'"—Washington Star.

A Curious Combat.
A traveler in South Africa witnessed not long since a singular combat. He was musing one morning, with his eyes on the ground, when he noticed a caterpillar crawling along at a rapid rate. Pursuing him was a host of small black ants.

Being quicker in their movements, the ants would catch up with the caterpillar, and one would mount his back and bite him. Pausing, the caterpillar would turn his head and bite and kill his tormentor. After slaughtering a dozen or more of his persecutors the caterpillar showed signs of fatigue. The ants made a combined attack. Biting himself to a stalk of grass, the caterpillar climbed up the tree tall first, followed by the ants. As one approached he seized it in his jaws and threw it off the stalk.

The ants, seeing that the caterpillar had too strong a position for them to overcome, resorted to strategy. They began sawing through the grass stalk. In a few minutes the stalk fell, and hundreds of ants pounced upon the fallen caterpillar. He was killed at once, and the victors marched off in great triumph, leaving the foe's body upon the field.

His Theory.
A novel explanation of the cause of thunder showers was once given a sojourner in a little Nova Scotia town by one of the inhabitants.

"Do you know what makes thunder?" the Nova Scotian inquired of his guest. "I've got a theory of my own, and I call it a pretty good one."

"I should like to hear it," was the diplomatic reply.

"Well," said the host slowly, "my idea is this: You know we hear about the air circulating and circulating all the time. My notion is that the pure air from above comes down here in summer and gets foul with all the smoke and dirt and grease, and then the heat drives it up again into the clouds, and when it gets up there it's pressed on all round by the clouds coming together, and it explodes! That's my theory. Of course," he added, with becoming modesty, "other folks may have others."—Youth's Companion.

Her Celestial Credentials.

"Put it down there," said the old man to the obituary writer, "that she wuz 42 an likely fer her age."

"That's down."

"That she wuz never known ter speak a cross word, bein deef an dumb from childhood."

"All right."

"That she is now at rest on Abraham's bosom— But hold on! Ain't that whar Lazarus is?"

"I think so."

He paused a moment as if in deep thought. Then he said:

"No matter! Put it down that she's thar, too, fer ef ever Lazarus sees her couln hef vacate an hunt another restin place. 'Sides that, he's been thar too long anyhow!"—Atlanta Constitution.

The Soft Answer.

"There!" said the angry man, showing a photograph, presumably of himself, under the photographer's nose. "Do you know what that makes me look like?"

"If you mean what it makes you look like at the present moment," answered the photographer, surveying the face of the angry man carefully, "it should say it makes you look as if you were about to throw a fit."—Indianapolis Press.

No Place Like Home.

An Atchison man took sick Saturday and decided to stay home till he got rested. He was back at work at noon Monday. His wife asked him within a few hours to take care of the baby, to chop onions for pickles, to grind the coffee, to dress the children and to milk the cow "while he was resting."—Atchison Globe.

The Gardener.

A few generations ago than it does today. Young men paid heavy premiums to get in as apprentices under learned gardeners, and when at the end of the term they were invested with the "blue apron" most of them would compare favorably in general intelligence with the graduates of our modern universities.

An Explanation.

"Your friend Groome boasts that his wife is college bred. What's meant by college bred, anyway?"

"Mebbe it's the stuff they learn to make at cooking school."—Exchange.

Music is sometimes divided into two classes, sacred and profane. For particular as to profane music, go to a "sacred concert."—Boston Transcript.

Forrest as a Negro Minstrel.

From about the beginning of American stage history there were negroes of the minstrel variety impersonated on the stage, though it was not until about 1840 that they were organized into bands. Some of the greatest actors of later days had their experience as minstrels, among them Joe Jefferson and Edwin Forrest.

Forrest was given a "song and dance" act to do when he was very young, and after he had studied it he asked where was the "old negro lady" that was to act his assistant in the piece. The management tried several of the women who were members of the company, but none of them would consent to blacken up, and, in fact, they were very indignant over the proposition. The actor, however, was not easily discouraged, and on the night of the first performance he blackened up and went around the corner to an old negro woman who did his washing.

"Hello, Dinah," he said on entering. "How 'yo be feelin dis bery fine ebenin?"

"Hello, yo," replied the African lady. "A sars to me 'yo am er bery fresh nigger."

"Ize no nigger!" answered Forrest, and then, time being rather short, he assumed his natural voice and told Dinah, much to her surprise, that he was Forrest, the actor, and that he wanted her to go on the stage with him that night and laugh loudly at frequent intervals, which was all the female part called for.

The two made a great hit and were kept on for some time. The story goes to show that Forrest might have been a good minstrel had he been of an ambitious nature.—Saturday Evening Post.

Read This Before You Write.

Never write poetry until you are at least 30, unless you fall in love, when it will come to you like the measles. You would better begin with stories—that is, if you have a leading idea and can invent situations. Do not attempt the novel until you have passed your fortieth year. A novel requires a knowledge of men and manners, a study of human character, and powers to create dialogue and invent surprises.

I know that there have been instances when very young men have written clever poems and novels, but these were freaks of genius which do not often occur. Avoid attempts at humor. That mine has already been worked for more than it is worth, and the best of it seems to be labored.

What the funny men do produce is not equal to the unintentional humor which is to be found in congressional speeches on the tariff, and in the old fashioned epigrams in the country churchyards.—Thomas Dunn English in Success.

Uses of Olive Oil.

Olive oil should be found in every nursery and on every medicine shelf. In time of croup it can be given frequently and will not disturb the digestion, as do many medicines. It is often given in place of cod liver oil and is as effective in building up the system and less disagreeable. It is recommended by many specialists both as a food and a tonic. A certain young chemist never has a cold or requires any medicine except a spoonful of olive oil every night and morning, which he takes regularly. He seldom wears an overcoat.—New York Tribune.

DRESS AS WELL AS YOU CAN

It Is One's Duty to Present a Pleasant Appearance.

This story is told in Denver of a man who was once a leading merchant there. In the early days of the city he walked its streets, out of work and money. He was poorly clad, but neat and clean. He sought employment from a prosperous grocer and said he was willing to do anything. The merchant at length sent him into his cellar to clean out a room so foully dirty that many a common laborer had refused to enter it. When the young man appeared in the evening, he was as neat in his appearance as he had been in the morning. Of course the merchant thought he had done little or nothing. But when he saw the cellar, clean and fresh, he said to the young man:

"You've not only shown that you are willing to work, but also that you have some respect for yourself. I guess I'll give you a job."

This young man, who in a few years became the head of the self-same business, realized the important fact that the worker is often scrutinized as closely as his work.

It is a man's duty toward his fellow man to dress as well as he can afford to. Nowhere in nature does the poorly dressed man find any excuse for his lack. Even the lowest forms of animal and plant life are clothed in pleasing colors.

Reptiles crawl in richly mottled skins; beasts of burden and birds of prey are clad in fur and gay plumage. Trees blossom in wonderful foliage, and that most plebeian of vegetables, the onion, reveals below the ground in colors that artists seek to imitate and above ground in a leafage and bloom odd and beautiful.

Everywhere in nature beauty is combined with use. It remains for man, the highest and noblest specimen of the Creator's handiwork, to be the dabb in the color scheme of the universe.—Weekly Bouquet.

Reasoning From Analogy.

Freddy is the son of a Fourth Avenue stockbroker, you will understand, and is therefore familiar with some of the terms of the profession.

"Papa," said Freddy.

"Well, my son?"

"Is there such a worm as a book-worm?"

"There is such a creature, Freddy, but it's very rare. The term book-worm, however, is applied to a person who is continually poring over books."

"And papa?"

"Well?"

"Is a man who is always poring over the ticker a tapeworm?"—Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

His Ignorance.

Tess—Oh, I like him well enough, but it's so hard to make him understand anything. Last night he asked me several times for a kiss, and I said, "No, no!" each time.

Jess—My goodness! I should think that was emphatic enough for any man.

Tess—It certainly should be for any one who knows that two negatives make a positive.—Philadelphia Press.

The Point of View.

Miss Willing—Do you believe it is wrong to marry for money?

Parson Brown—Of course not. Five dollars is my regular fee.—Chicago News.

BEST GAMBLING SYSTEM.

The One That Will Surely Beat Faro and Roulette.

"Every confirmed gambler in the world has spent more or less time trying to figure out some system to beat the game," said a well known northern sporting man. "The commonest and most plausible scheme is the one known as 'progression.' It is simply a doubling of bets until a winning occurs, and theoretically it is perfect, but the trouble is that all gambling games have a limit, and the doubling process increases a wager with such enormous rapidity that it is apt to get over the stipulated amount before the winning takes place.

"I was at Monte Carlo last spring," continued the speaker, "and was surprised at the number of tourists who frequented the grounds peddling 'sure thing' systems to break the bank. The ludicrous part of it was that most of the peddlers were seedy and poverty stricken in appearance, yet they purloined to sell secrets which would infallibly enrich any purchaser. I asked one fellow why he didn't try his system himself and buy a new hat, and he replied very glibly that he was 'working for a syndicate' and under bonds not to play.

"Nearly all of these systems are based on progression and would be impossible in high play owing to the casino limit. Nevertheless I saw a number of small progression players at the tables and was told that they had been a fixture there for many years. They were nearly all horrible looking, bloodless old women, who began with the smallest possible wager and quit when they won 20 francs, or less than \$4. A house official informed me that they were tolerated about the place on account of age and infirmity and that their daily wages were regarded in the light of a pension.

"In the days of open gambling in New Orleans I remember there used to be several broken down sports who were said to make a living off the games by 'progression playing.' I have my doubts about it, however. The best system and the only system that will beat faro and roulette is to stay away."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

A Jamaican Experience.

For some years after my marriage I lived at Old Harbor, a small place about 20 miles from Kingston. One day when a visit to my Kingston dressmaker was a necessity I ordered a young negro boy to get upon the rumble and drive me to the town.

I paid my visit to the dressmaker, and, receiving my frock, a light summer thing, from her, I placed it in the bag beneath the buggy seat and drove on to my sister's, where I went in to escape the heated part of the day, giving my boy sixpence and bidding him see the lights and return at 4 o'clock.

He turned up punctually, with the grin still on his face, and in due time we reached Old Harbor once more. When I went to take out my crisp muslin, I found, to my consternation, it was a wet, sloppy mass. No rain had fallen, and even then—

I turned to the boy: "Solomon, what have you done with this muslin? How did it get so wet?"

But the look of utter helplessness on his face stopped me.

"Lor, missus, it am queer, but not so queer as what do happen to me. Me bought a quattig (1½ d.) wort of dat pretty ting dey calls 'ice' to bring home an show ma sister, an I put him in da wud wud dress to keep him safe, an now him gone for true, an how him get out I don't know, you sit on him all de time!"—Harper's Magazine.

\$5,000 For Twenty Words.

One day Andrew Carnegie at Pittsburgh called up one of his New York lawyers by long distance telephone.

The steelmaker wanted to ask a question, but could not make himself understood clearly over the telephone, so he asked the lawyer to come to Pittsburgh.

The lawyer said he had an important appointment in New York next day and could not get away.

"Come over now, then," Mr. Carnegie said.

"Can't get train," answered the lawyer.

"Hire a special," was the answer which came back from Pittsburgh.

So the lawyer engaged a special train, went to Pittsburgh and saw Mr. Carnegie.

The steelmaker asked the lawyer's advice as to whether the question troubling him called for "yes" or "no."

The lawyer answered, "No."

"Thank you," said Mr. Carnegie.

"Good night," said Mr. Carnegie.

The lawyer had said less than 20 words, for which he received \$5,000, said "Good night, Mr. Carnegie," and took a special train back to New York in time to keep his appointment next day.—New York Herald.

The Old Time Doctor.

"When I was a young fellow," said the man who notices things, "the family physician attended to all the ills of the family, and the specialists of the profession were wholly unknown. The country doctor was a surgeon as well as a physician. He was almost always clever and usually had remedies of his own invention for common ailments. A large number of the successful patent medicines now before the public are prescriptions of the old time country physician. I could name a dozen such.

"Old Dr. Hill, who was the leader in the town I grew up in, was called into the country by an urgent message one night. He wasn't advised what the patient was suffering from and upon arrival found an unconscious patient that was subjecting its owner to almost unbearable pain. Not a surgical instrument did the doctor have with him, and his office was seven miles away. Did he send back for his instruments? Not much! He extracted that tooth with an ordinary hammer and nail to the complete satisfaction of his patient and himself. I'll wager he made a mighty good job of it too."—New York Tribune.

She Couldn't Stand It.

"No," said the beautiful actress: "I cannot be your wife. I love you dearly, Mr. Frost, and if you had any other name I would be glad to go through life sharing your joys and sorrows."

"But," he protested, "my name should not stand in the way. What is it Shakespeare says? 'A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.' What is the matter with my name? Does history record a single dark or unworthy deed committed by a Frost? No. Ah, darling, say you will make me the happiest man on earth!"

She moaned, "Why, if I were to marry you every newspaper paragraph in the country would have something to say next morning about the Frost Miss Darlington received at yesterday's performance."—Chicago Times-Herald.

Not Sensitive.

Sophy (who accepted Mr. Charles Fleetwood the night before)—Does Mr. Fleetwood strike you as being a sensitive man, Pauline?

Pauline (who doesn't know of the engagement)—Gracious, no! A man who has been rejected by 14 girls after six months and gets fat on it cannot be sensitive. Why, Sophy, what's the matter?

She had fainted.—London Fun.

Usually the Case.

Askington—Who was your friend whom I saw you walking with this afternoon?

Teller—Hoh! He wasn't a friend. That's my brother-in-law.—Harper's Bazar.

The Unique Horn of the Unicorn.

The horn of a unicorn was shown at Windsor castle and in 1598 was valued at over £10,000. Lewis Vertomannus, a gentleman of Rome, saw with his own eyes two unicorns presented to the sultan of Mecca by a king of Ethiopia. They were in a park of the temple of Mecca and were not much unlike a goat of 30 months of age. This was in 1593. The animal became extinct about the end of the seventeenth century.

The unicorn is represented in the ruins at Persepolis, and it was adopted by the Persians as the emblem of speed and strength. In the middle ages it was the symbol of purity. The unicorn hated the elephant, and it used to whet its horn on a stone before it struck the foe in the abdomen. No family, by the way, should be without one of these horns, the average length of which is four feet. They defend from witchcraft. Thus Torquemada had one always on his writing table. Furthermore, a drinking cup made from one will be a safeguard against poison, as will the ground powder put in drink, and indeed the walls of the palace of St. Mark could not be poisoned in the good old days of adventure because these beneficent horns had been thrown into them. Unicorn's horn was formerly sold by apothecaries at \$120 an ounce.—Boston Journal.

No Use For the Water.

"They tell a good many jokes about Kentucky colonels and their natural aversion to water," said a fat drummer in the hotel corridor the other night, "but the richest thing in that line I ever knew to come off in real life happened over in Alabama when old man Briggs was trying to sell his summer hotel. Briggs had a pretty piece of property in the Alabama highlands, and its star feature was a magnificent big spring that welled into a pool of basins and was as cold as ice all the year round. He had good prospects of making a popular resort out of the place, but he got the California fever and offered it at a sacrifice to a race horse man from Kentucky who had an idea that he was cut out for a landlord.

"The race horse man was a typical Kentucky colonel of the old school and a mighty fine fellow. He came down to look over the ground in person, and Briggs started out with him to point out the principal attractions. At last they came to the famous spring. 'This, colonel,' said Briggs, stopping at the edge of the basin and swelling with pride, 'is a wonderful natural reservoir of crystal pure water, inexhaustible in volume and ice cold in temperature. It is undoubtedly the finest spring in the south.'

"'Hum-m-m!' grunted the colonel, sizing up the bubbling pool. 'I reckon I'll have to have this hole filled up if we close our deal, Mr. Briggs.'

"'Filled up!' exclaimed Briggs in horror. 'Yes, suh,' replied the colonel calmly. 'You see, I'm not a calculation on keeping any stock on the place.'—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Her Sacrifice.

The Rev. Cyrus T. Brady says in his book of missionary reminiscences: "I was once preaching about missions, urging the congregation to make some sacrifice for the missionary cause and indicating to them several methods by which they could follow my advice. Among other things I suggested that they refrain from purchasing any book which they very much desired and donate the money to me instead for my missionary work. I happened to have perpetrated a book myself.

"You will therefore understand my feelings when a very bright woman in the congregation came up to me and handed me \$1 with the remark, 'I had intended to buy your book and read it, Mr. Brady, but I have concluded to follow your advice and give you the money for missions instead.'

"I accepted the situation gracefully and told her I would lend her my own copy of the book to read. She smiled and thanked me, and as she did so I voiced my thought in this way. 'But after all Mrs. B., there does not seem to be any sacrifice on your part in this transaction, for you have the happy consciousness of having given the money for missions and yet have the book as well.'

"No sacrifice?" she replied. 'Why, I have to read the book!'"

How the Burmese Make Fire.

One day a Burmese messenger brought me a note. While he was waiting for the reply, I observed an object suspended around his waist. On asking what it was he showed me that it was an implement for producing fire. It was a rude example of a scientific instrument employed by lecturers at home to illustrate the production of heat by suddenly compressed air. A piston fitted into the tube; the former was hollowed at the lower end and smeared with wax to receive a piece of cotton or tinder, which when pressed into it adhered. The tube was closed at one end. Placing the piston at the top of the tube, with a smart blow he struck it down and immediately withdrew it, the tinder on fire. The sudden compression of the air having ignited it. I was so much struck with the scientific ingenuity of this rude implement that I procured it from the Burman and sent it to the Asiatic society of Bengal, with a short description of its uses.—"Recollections of My Life," by Surgeon General Sir John Fayer.

A Parson's Fun.

A writer in The Cornhill Magazine credits the late Canon Bingham with the following bit of wit:

He was driving one day with other clergy to a clerical meeting, when the conversation turned upon the meaning of the two places they were pearing. Wool and Wareham, in the county of Dorset.

"How do you account for the origin of these names, Canon Bingham?" asked one of the party.

"Don't you know this is a sheep country?" replied the canon, "and at Wool you wool the sheep and at Wareham you wear 'em?"

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PRESIDENTIAL LIGHTNING.

Storm's Frank Nervous a Young Law Student to Bet and He Won.

"The lightning caused me to bet on the presidential election in 1860," said a Wall street man, "and I won. 'I'm not more superstitious than the average individual,' continued the man, 'although my act would indicate the contrary. I was a young man in a law office in a Kentucky town. My preceptor had passed over his desk a poster containing the portraits of all of the candidates, Lincoln and Hamlin, Breckinridge and Lane, Douglas and Johnson and Bell and Everett. The poster contained the platforms of the various parties. There was some uncertainty in that campaign. My preceptor was an enthusiastic Douglas man and wanted to bet all he had on his candidate. It was my first experience in a presidential campaign, and I had a fool notion that Bell and Everett would be elected. I had never made a money bet, but I was willing to take up my Blackstonian preceptor, although I lacked nerve.

"One day there was a thunderstorm. The lightning loosed a number of things in the town, the building in which I was a law student being one. In one of its pranks the lightning cut in the wall on which that political poster was posted. The result was that the upper part of the poster hung down from the wall, covering up all the candidates save Lincoln and Hamlin. Despite my sympathies for Bell and Everett I imagined I saw in this condition of the poster the result of that election and a few days later when the Douglas enthusiast talked on his paper notes and offered to bet \$25 even on his man I took him up. He was very much astonished to think I would bet on Lincoln and Hamlin. He said I was a young ass and other things and that he would bet with me to teach me a lesson. After the election he asked me how I came to take the chance, for there were few Lincoln votes in the town. When I told him the source of my tip, he grew serious.

"You have won your first bet on a presidential election," he said, 'but remember, young man, lightning never strikes in the same place twice.'

"But it did in this case. Lincoln was re-elected."—New York Sun.

Fat Policemen.

"Have you ever noticed that nearly all policemen get fat?" asked a man who keeps his eyes open. "This would seem to disprove the theory that walking in the open air is a means of reducing superfluous weight. I have known new policemen to start on their beats weighing no more than 125 pounds. In six months they would tip the scales at 150 and in a year reach the 200 mark. It must be the slow sauntering in the open air that does it, for I have noticed that while policemen grow fat the house servants, who are confined to the stations, are invariably thin. Those who patrol the streets gain the maximum weight in about three years. The muscles then harden, and despite their apparent burden of flesh the men usually develop great activity. One of the best runners and jumpers I know is a policeman who weighs nearly 300 pounds."—Philadelphia Record.

Misapprehension.

A small boy the other day heard the couplet of a hymn which runs thus:

And satan trembles when he sees
The meekest saint upon his knees.

His pity was all for satan. "Why does satan let the saint sit upon his knees if it makes him tremble?"—Dochester Post-Express.

Bark.

Now a large, dark vessel was described in the Bosphorus, belching fire and waving the colors of those historic shores with the thunder of her guns.

"What bark is that?" asked the sultan.

"That, I take it, is the bark of the dogs of war," said the grand vizier wittily.

This sally was followed by a strict party laugh, the opposition growling.—Detroit Journal.

Why Aim With One Eye?

Joskins—I say, old boy, this is my first day at shooting. You might tell me in confidence what people shut one eye for when they're sighting anything.

Hoskins—Oh, that's perfectly simple, my dear fellow. You see, if they were to shut both eyes they wouldn't be able to see anything.—Pick Me Up.

Appropriate Shades.

A party of Americans were sitting on the upper deck of a Rhine river boat enjoying the charming scenery. One was reading aloud from a guidebook about the various castles as they came into view. Just as the boat was passing one of the finest old buildings a woman in the party exclaimed to her companions: "Why, that old castle is inhabited. See, there are blinds at the windows."

"No," said a man standing by her side, "those are the shades of their ancestors."